

IRON COUNTY (UTAH). COMMISSION [1475]

MINUTES, 1851-

DESCRIPTION: These minute books record the actions of the county commission, the governing body of the county. The commission (known during the territorial period as the county court) was authorized to manage all county business and property. This includes budgeting, equipment purchasing, and auditing; use of county lands; districting for schools, roads, voting, drainage, etc.; taxing, specifically acting as an ex-officio board of equalization; business licensing; arranging for the construction of roads, public buildings, etc.; supervising the conduct and payment of all county personnel; providing for basic health care, public safety, and care of the indigent; canvassing election returns and appointing certain officials; and incorporating municipalities.

A law enacted in December 1850 by the general assembly of the State of Deseret provided for the organization of Iron County. Officials first met on 3 June 1851 and officially organized the county on 4 May 1852. Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts regarding the governing of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court.

The court was authorized to manage all county business and county property. This included auditing all claims against the county and payments by the treasurer. The court controlled all timber and water privileges and could grant mill sites and herd grounds. Court members created election precincts, road districts, and school districts and appointed superintendents of such districts. They located sites and oversaw the erection of public buildings. The selectmen in conjunction with the court were to provide for the maintenance of the poor, insane, and orphans. They levied property taxes for county purposes.

All these activities are noted in the minutes. The day's entries are prefaced by date, names of

those present, and where and when they met. Bids received, and bills and wages paid in conjunction with the activities are noted. The predominant activities in the territorial period involve laying out roads, bridges, and irrigation canals. Names of individuals appointed as road commissioners, poundkeepers, or other county officials (e.g. teacher examiners, fence viewers, physician) are mentioned frequently. Individual names and actions taken are also noted for the indigent, insane, and infirm.

The county court began granting liquor licenses in 1861. Butcher licenses were added in 1865. In 1884 the legislature mandated that business licenses in general be obtained from the county courts for operation in unincorporated county areas; most applications were for liquor licenses. Provisions were made the same year for the county court to approve the incorporation of towns. The court's role in tax abatements and care of the indigent, insane and orphans also becomes more apparent by the 1870s and 1880s. The granting of franchises for such things as telephone and railroads increases as well by the end of the century.

With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes.

There is an ongoing emphasis on roads and road districts in the early 20th century. More franchises#for telephones, electricity, railroads, etc.#are granted and the details recorded. Water rights continue to be mentioned, particularly the Iron County Irrigation District organized in 1911. Other responsibilities noted in the minutes include supervision of the conduct of all county, district and precinct officials, boards, and agencies. The commission oversaw the county hospital, coordinated the location of jail cages, and appointed a library board. Annual budgets, rather than regular individual claims, become standard by the 1930s. Personnel actions are recorded, often by individual name, for county employees, including appointments and wage increases.

Commissioners served as canvassers of elections also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting districts, and assigning polling places. The members continued as a board of equalization for county property assessments with the added authorization to refund taxes erroneously collected. Tax abatements, redemptions, and quit claims are common in the 1930s and into the 1940s. Discussion of emergency relief and county works projects also is common in the 1930s. Commissioners continued to care for paupers and oversee public health and safety. The commission also continued to grant business licenses, pass ordinances, and issue bonds.

ARRANGEMENT: The series is arranged chronologically by date of meeting.

RESEARCH NOTE: Some of the film is illegible. Volume B also contains the minutes of the Iron County Probate Court interspersed with the minutes of the County Court, although with a different page numbering system. Reel 4 ends mid-paragraph; the location of any

filming beyond that is unknown.

Given the diversity and extent of the county commission's activities, the minute books should be consulted not only by researchers seeking information on the commission, but by those seeking information on any county agencies, their personnel, or their services to individuals; on private contractors and their plans for work on county projects or private subdivisions; on private businesses operating within the unincorporated county limits; and on private individuals or charitable institutions holding taxable or untaxable property within the county. Virtually any person living in, or any activity taking place in, unincorporated areas of Iron county (up to and including the incorporation or disincorporation of municipalities) was affected by the activities of the county commission and is reflected in the minutes.

RELATED RECORDS: While the minute books summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies recorded the particulars. Thus the other holdings of the county commission and other Iron county agencies should be consulted. The MINUTES of the Iron County Probate Court, some of which appear in volume B here, are part of series 17477.

PROCESSING NOTE: The Iron County Clerk as secretary for the Iron County Commission may have current holdings. Original paper copy may be held in the office. Filming was begun in 1966 by the LDS Genealogical Society and continued by the Utah State Archives. The series was processed by A.C. Cone in February 1996. Pieces of volume D were cut off of both reels 1 and 2 as the volume appeared intact on reel 3.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description	Volume
1	1851, Jun	A
	3-1853, Jun 5 (?)	
1	[Probate Court Minutes, p. 1-21]; 1854, Feb 18-Apr 11 (page 1); [Probate Court Minutes, no numbers]; 1854, Sep 4-1870, Sep 28 (page 2- 103)	B
2	1870, Dec 5-1894, Sep 3	C
3	1894, Dec 3-1913, Jun 19	D

Reel	Description	Volume
4	1913, Jul 7-1923,3 Jan 8	
4	1923, Feb 13-1928, Nov 13	4
4	1928, Dec 10-1933, Oct 9	5
4	1933, Nov 13-1938, May 14	6
4	1938, May 31-1941, Dec 31	7
4	1942, Jan 12-1946, May 31	8
4	1946, Jun 10-1948, Oct 11	9